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ABSTRACT

Based on findings from the "High School and Beyond" (HS&B) national longitudinal study conducted in 1980, an agenda is suggested for decision making within schools that serve Hispanic children. This agenda is based on the needs and attitudes of the children and includes the following: (1) an emphasis on human relations of the school to develop a friendly and learning-oriented atmosphere; (2) involvement of students and parents in the process; (3) revised academic remediation and school tracking policies; (4) experimentation with work and study programs for older students; (5) additional resources to help students meet new academic requirements before they are imposed; and (6) modification of instructional styles to raise motivation for learning. Other suggestions are made based on the idea that an individual school can successfully undertake its own improvement. Charts and tables on 1980 high school sophomores provide data on their attitudes and beliefs concerning school and their personal lives. Examples of successful programs for at risk students are included. (AO)

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- Relating Over-age Students to School, Work, and Family
- Policy Remedies

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New York City and Washington, D.C.

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THIS SECOND ISSUE of HPDP's *Research Bulletin* joins its other publications that reach for improved knowledge of what will soon be our country's largest cultural minority—and, in some parts of our land, a majority of its citizens.

Three years ago HPDP—the Hispanic Policy Development Project—issued *"Make Something Happen"—Hispanics and Urban High School Reform*, the two-volume report of its National Commission on Secondary Schooling for Hispanics. The report contained the findings of a distinguished group of Americans about the needs and problems of U.S. high school youths with Hispanic backgrounds. The title speaks for itself, and for a group of young Americans growing in numbers and proportion in our society, frequently underserved and misunderstood in our social institutions.

Common decency calls for thoughtful, informed efforts to make Hispanic youth more successful in our schools and in their transition to work; our national self-interest argues as well for a new commitment on behalf of Hispanic youth.

This publication looks at Hispanic youth through the lens of a major longitudinal study of young Americans, High School and Beyond. HSB follows a large national sample of young people, accumulating significant evidence about the entire group as it matures, plus the subgroups within it. The result is invaluable information about trends in many facets of U.S. life—education, work, family, and citizenship—as well as evidence on the attitudes and expectations of these young people.

1980 High School Sophomores From Poverty Backgrounds: Whites, Blacks, Hispanics Look at School and Adult Responsibilities

By Harold Howe II

Reflecting, as an educator, on the evidence provided in this publication, placed against the background of earlier HPDP studies, I have to conclude that it is time to abandon some old sacred cows, and some new ones, too, if we want our schools to be creators of success rather than mere sorters of children and youth. It seems to me, therefore, that in both elementary and secondary schools attention should be given to the kinds of changes suggested here. This publication does not offer a prescription for all schools. It does suggest an agenda for decision making within schools that serve Hispanic children, an agenda based on what is known about the learning needs and attitudes of U.S. Hispanic youngsters. Not surprisingly, these needs are not much different from those of White, Black, Asian, and Native American youngsters.

Continued on page 2

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Harold Howe II

Continued from page 1

HPDP's suggestions include such items as the following:

- Emphasize the human relations of the school, in order to develop a friendly, orderly, and learning-oriented atmosphere.
- Involve students and parents in creating such a climate, in both plans to deal with behavior problems and plans for improving academic success.
- Rethink academic remediation; avoid repeating school terms by using summers and special after-school sessions, and sell remediation as an opportunity, not a penalty.
- Experiment with combined programs of work and study for older students.
- Add resources to help students meet new academic requirements *before* the new requirements are imposed.
- Revise school tracking policies to make them more flexible, so that youngsters can jump the tracks, perhaps going so far as to abolish tracks entirely in favor of individualized learning.
- Modify instructional styles and routines in order to provide greater motivation for learning.
- Plan to overcome the disadvantages of large schools through groupings that help both students and faculty to know each other.
- Make strong, positive expectations of learning a watchword for students, parents, and teachers.
- Provide students with the support they need for success, using mentors, adopt-a-student projects, and the like.

The most hopeful aspect of the current school reform movement is the idea that *an individual school can undertake its own improvement* by considering such ideas as those listed above and by making its own commitment *to act* on them. HPDP does all schools a service by underlining these important choices and by showing how they apply to a segment of our population too often neglected.

Harold Howe II
Harvard Graduate School of Education

Definitions

All the data used in this issue of *The Research Bulletin* are drawn from High School and Beyond (HSB)—the national longitudinal survey of 1980 high school sophomores and seniors sponsored by the U.S. Center for Education Statistics. Data on the individuals sampled in 1980 also were collected in follow-up surveys in 1982, '84, and '86.

- ***Graduates*** are defined here as students who graduated with a grade average of C+ or higher (based on school transcripts), ***and does not include at-risk graduates.***

- ***At-risk graduates*** are defined here as students with a grade average of mostly C's or less who nevertheless graduated from high school. *At-risk graduate* here has two meanings: (1) A high school graduate who, on the basis of poor grades, might well have become a dropout; (2) a high school graduate who, because of poor academic preparation in high school, is at-risk socially and economically.

- ***Non-graduates*** are defined here as 1980 sophomores who dropped out of school between the base year survey in the spring of 1980 and the first follow-up in the spring of 1982 and had not returned to school by the time of the second follow-up in the spring of 1984, or those who had returned to school but had not yet graduated at the time of the second follow-up.

Note that the base year survey of sophomores would not have picked up those students who dropped out of school before the tenth grade. It is estimated that 41% of all Hispanics who drop out of school do so before the tenth grade. While we do not have similar estimates for Blacks and Whites, their pre-tenth grade dropout rates probably would not be as high as the Hispanic rate.

- ***SES—socioeconomic status***—as used here reflects a score based on five components: the father's occupation, the father's education, the mother's education, the family income, and material possessions in the household.

- ***Low SES students***, as the expression is used here, are youngsters falling into the lowest quartile of the distribution of all measures of SES for the entire sample.

Data presented here are based on student answers to certain HSB questions. See page 12 for the original and the recoded questions.

Disadvantaged Young People: In School and as Adults

Our initial issue of *The Research Bulletin* dealt with the nation's young adults—first interviewed in 1980 as high school sophomores in the High-School-and-Beyond (HSB) longitudinal survey—and the progress they were making in 1984 in major areas of life, such as work, home, marriage, parenthood. In this issue, we focus on certain of these same young people—those from a background of poverty and deprivation. Although Whites outnumber Blacks and Hispanics in this low socioeconomic (low SES) category, large percentages of young Hispanics and Blacks do fall into it—43% of Hispanics, 38% of Blacks, and 19% of Whites.

With respect to these low SES youths, we look here at their 1980 high school sophomore attitudes and expectations about assuming adult responsibilities. We then try to link these expectations to their 1980 perceptions about some of their school experiences. We also look for cultural attributes and perspectives that might explain Hispanic differences among these low SES students. In keeping with the objectives of *The Research Bulletin*, we conclude by considering the policy implications of our findings.

Our figures challenge one common assumption: that minorities from low socioeconomic backgrounds cannot do well in school. On the contrary, we find that many HSB, low SES, minority students did achieve good grades in high school. We can see in Figure 6 that the percentage of low SES sophomores does increase as we move from graduate to non-graduate status. But among the 1980 sophomores who had become graduates by 1984, over a third of the Hispanics and close to half the Blacks were in fact low SES students; among White graduates, 14% were low SES students. Among the non-graduates, however, well over half the minorities and 44% of the Whites fell in the low SES category. It is interesting to note that less than half the White dropouts were low SES.

Figure 6
1984 Graduation Status of Low Socioeconomic 1980 Sophomores: Hispanics, Blacks, and Whites

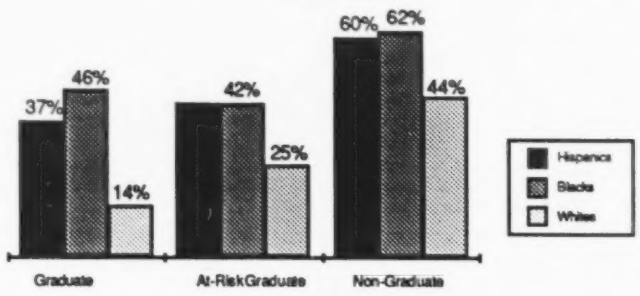


Table 4

1980 Sophomores* Who Considered Work and Family Values To Be Very Important (Percentages)

1984 Status

	Graduate				At-Risk Graduate				Non-Graduate			
	Hisp	Black	White	All	Hisp	Black	White	All	Hisp	Black	White	All
Successful in work	82	94	85	86	77	81	73	76	69	73	75	73
Finding steady job	81	88	85	85	79	84	84	83	84	67	79	78
Having lots of money	29	43	24	29	43	50	38	42	42	35	36	37
Happy family life	82	83	89	86	77	78	79	78	76	67	80	77
Having children	42	30	42	40	42	32	37	37	43	31	42	40
Living close to parents	29	16	21	21	20	27	20	22	22	22	17	19

*Low Socioeconomic Status

Family and Work

The 1980 sophomores in the HSB survey were asked to assess the importance of certain values relating to family and work.

In Table 4 we display for each category of graduate status the percentages of *only* those students who thought these values were *very important*. The students not represented in this table answered either *not important* or *somewhat important*.

Many of the Hispanics who did poorly in school or failed to graduate may have decided early in high school to give priority to the goals of a steady job and an immediate income. Except among Hispanic non-graduates, the percentages of 1980 sophomores who said that being successful in work is *very important* parallel the percentages of those who said that finding a steady job is *very important*. But while 84% of these Hispanic non-graduates thought it *very important* to find steady work, only 69% felt that way about being successful in work. This 15% disparity in attitude between holding a steady job, on the one hand, and achieving success becomes more pronounced when we consider just the Hispanic non-graduate *males*: the figures are 87% and 65% respectively. (See Figure 7.) We do not have a clear explanation for these disparities. Is it lack of counseling? A perceived lack of career opportunities? A reaching for respect as a self-supporting worker in the eyes of family and friends? Or simply an immediate need for money to support self and family?

Further support for this view can be gathered in Table 4 from the percentages of Hispanics who thought having lots of money was *very important*. The at-risk and non-graduates appeared to be more likely to look

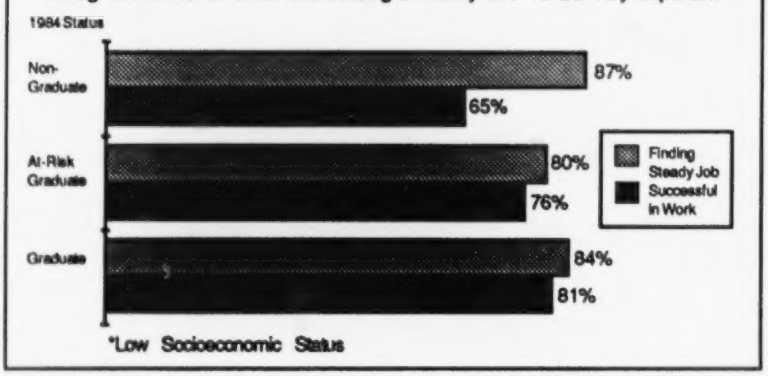
for today's dollars in place of long-range career rewards.

Hispanics, although they represent only 7% of the population, took nearly a quarter of the new jobs created last year in this country, mainly low-wage service jobs, according to a Labor Department report. And, indeed, because the proportion of high school dropouts among all Hispanic 20- to 24-year-olds has hovered near 40% for the last several years, a large pool of unskilled persons is present to take these jobs.

Many of these young people—graduates, at-risk graduates, and non-graduates—said that having children was *very important*. A happy family life appears to be more important to graduates than to at-risk and non-graduates, but the numbers of those who thought having children was *very important* are about the same for all the groups across the three categories. (See Table 4.) In their sophomore year about 42% of the low SES Hispanics in each category considered having children *very important*. Four years later, we find that although many Hispanic graduates had been able to defer having children, the majority of the Hispanic female non-graduates already had become parents. (Table 2 in the first issue of *The Research Bulletin* illustrates this difference in behavior, although the data presented there includes Hispanics of all classes.) In his analyses of data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Young Americans, Northeastern University's Andrew Sum and the Children's Defense Fund found that teenagers with poor basic skills are far more likely to become parents at an early age than are those with average or above-average academic skills.

As sophomores, 29% of the Hispanic graduates considered living close to their parents to be *very important*. And when we compare male and female Hispanic graduates, as in Figure 8, we find that 32% of the females wanted to remain near their parents. The desire to maintain strong family ties undoubtedly contributes to the fact that some of the ablest Hispanic students in search of post-secondary education turn to their local public and two-year community colleges, or do not attend college at all.

Figure 7
1980 Hispanic Male Sophomores* Who Considered
Being Successful In Work and Finding a Steady Job To Be Very Important



Worker and Spouse

In the last section, we learned how 1980 high school sophomores felt about work and family values. In this section, we look at the ages at which the same sophomores expected to assume important adult responsibilities. In general, those students represented in Tables 5 and 6 who expected to be ready to assume adult responsibilities by age 19 or younger were also more likely to lack a commitment to education. The problem lies in determining whether either factor causes the other, or whether the two are mutually reinforcing.

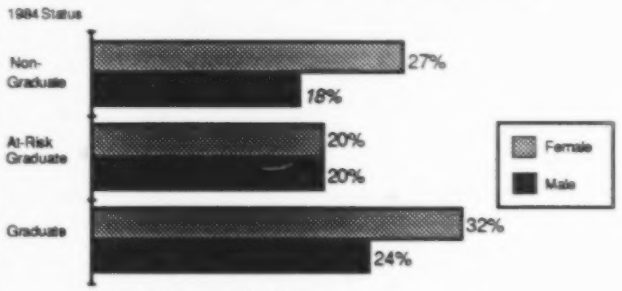
In Figure 9, we find that among low SES graduates and at-risk graduates, White females are the most likely to expect marriage by age 19 or younger, while Blacks were least likely. But among the non-graduates, fully 50% of the Hispanic females expected marriage by age 19.

Although the female sophomores who expected to bear their first child by 19 or younger are too few to be considered statistically reliable for the individual groups in the graduate and at-risk categories, a clear jump in rates is evident for the non-graduate category, compared to graduates and at-risk graduates.

Note that large percentages of the female sophomores expected to be living in their own homes by age 19 or younger. In Figure 10 we focus only on young women in the 10th grade who expected to be living in their own homes by age 19 or younger; the percentages represent those female students who expected *also* to be married by age 19 or younger. In all three categories, Hispanic females were the most likely to expect early marriage and life in their own homes. Is this due to the traditional notion that young Hispanic women must marry before they can leave their family homes? Note, however, that the percentages for White females in the graduate and at-risk categories are close to the Hispanic figures.

Figure 8

1980 Hispanic Sophomores* Who Considered Living Close To Their Parents To Be Very Important



*Low Socioeconomic Status
Numbers in italics unreliable—shown for trend only

Table 5

1980 Female Sophomores* Who Expected to Assume Adult Roles At Age 19 or Younger (Percentages)

	1984 Graduate				1984 At-Risk Graduate				1984 Non-Graduate			
	Hisp	Blk	Wht	All	Hisp	Blk	Wht	All	Hisp	Blk	Wht	All
Get Married	19	*7*	23	19	17	*9*	24	18	50	*14*	36	35
Have first child	*8*	*9*	*4*	6	*7*	*13*	*7*	8	29	*29*	21	24
Live in own home	45	31	62	53	45	39	75	59	71	*41*	87	74
Start regular job	69	62	78	73	64	62	82	73	81	74	79	78
Finish full time education	47	34	53	48	62	52	77	68	75	62	83	77

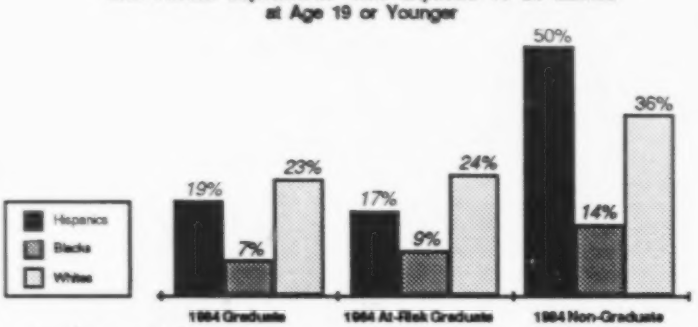
Table 6

1980 Male Sophomores* Who Expected to Assume Adult Roles at Age 19 or Younger (Percentages)

	1984 Graduate				1984 At-Risk Graduate				1984 Non-Graduate			
	Hisp	Blk	Wht	All	Hisp	Blk	Wht	All	Hisp	Blk	Wht	All
Live in own home	33	28	46	40	48	30	55	49	56	*35*	62	56
Start regular job	67	63	70	68	79	80	80	80	72	83	82	79
Finish full time education	49	41	52	49	69	58	78	73	85	49	77	74

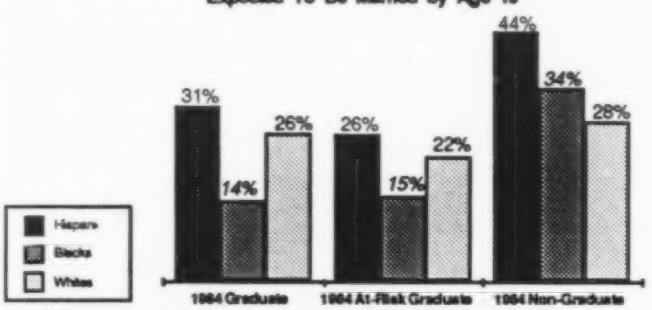
*Low Socioeconomic Status
Numbers in italics are unreliable—shown for trend only

Figure 9
1980 Female Sophomores* Who Expected To Be Married at Age 19 or Younger



*Low Socioeconomic Status
Numbers in italics are unreliable—shown for trend

Figure 10
Percent of 1980 Sophomores*, Expecting To Live In Own Home by Age 19, Who Expected To Be Married by Age 19



*Low Socioeconomic Status
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The figures for going to work at a regular job and finishing full-time education by age 19 or younger move upward across the three categories for both the females in Table 5 and the males in Table 6. Clearly, many of the eventual non-graduates foresaw, as sophomores, the ending of their full-time education and the beginning of regular employment by age 19.

School Affinity and Alienation

Among the factors that affect the acquiring of education, according to numerous studies, is the quality of that education and the interest in students shown by their teachers. In this section we learn how these 1980 sophomores viewed the fairness of school discipline, the quality of their academic instruction, and the interest in students displayed by their teachers. Again, we have organized these views by the students' graduate status in 1984. (See Table 7.)

A near consistency in attitudes on the fairness of school discipline appears across the categories and groups. However, moving from graduates to non-graduates, a clear decline—a 13-point spread—is apparent in the *good or excellent* ratings for both the quality of academic instruction and the degree of teacher interest in students.

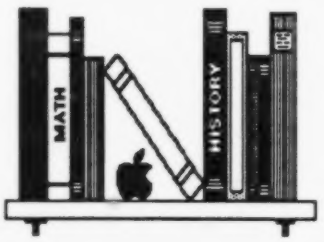
Do students enrolled in academic programs, general programs, and vocational programs see their schools differently? In general, we can see that a graduate in 1984 was more likely to have been a 1980 sophomore who rated the quality of instruction and the degree of teacher interest in students as *good or excellent*. Conversely, the non-graduates were least likely to consider these aspects of their schooling as *good or excellent*. These findings are what one would expect.

When we break down these findings by whether the student was enrolled in an academic, general or vocational program, we see different trends according to program participation (See Figure 11.) Participation in academic programs seems to have inspired higher ratings among graduates and at-risk graduates.

While participation in vocational programs does not inspire the highest ratings among the graduates, the *good or excellent* ratings for vocational programs remain at similar levels across the three categories.

Except for the non-graduates, more Hispanics in academic programs, compared to those in vocational and general programs, rated their schools' academic instructional quality as *good or excellent*. More than two-thirds of the graduates and more than half the at-risk graduates agreed on this rating. Interestingly, the general program participants' ratings do not change much across the three statuses, unlike the ratings of the academic program participants.

Figure 12 shows how Hispanic sophomores rated their teachers' interest in students.



At-risk graduates in both the academic and vocational programs rated this interest higher than did the graduates. Do teachers in these programs actually show more interest in these students? On the other hand, the general education track drops off sharply, from about 54% to about 32%. Vocational program participants do not vary much across the three categories.

Over-age Students and Adult Responsibilities

Is school alienation related to a willingness to assume adult responsibilities? Judging from their ratings on aspects of their schooling, the students who did not graduate in 1984 seem to have been less "connected" to their schools in 1980 than were the students who did graduate.

Although many research surveys cite poor grades as the major reason given by students for dropping out of school, some of these studies indicate that school failure and dropping out often are related to the fact that the students in question are over-age for grade level, behind their chronological peers in school. If many of the students who did not graduate in 1984—as well as the graduates who did poorly in school—were over-age, this might explain the inclination of these students to assume adult responsibilities sooner than observers would expect.

Some researchers consider a student who is two years over-age for grade level to be seriously behind in school. But for our purposes here, we will consider as over-age for their grade the 1980 sophomores who were 17 years or older—one year or more over 16, the most common age of pupils in the 10th grade. Using

Table 7

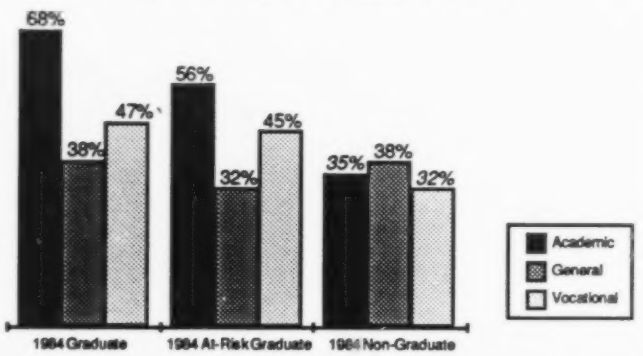
1980 Sophomores* Who Considered Aspects of School To Be Good or Excellent (Percentages)

1984 Status

	Graduate				At-risk Graduate				Non-Graduate			
	Hisp	Blk	Wht	All	Hisp	Blk	Wht	All	Hisp	Blk	Wht	All
Fairness of discipline	32	38	42	39	31	26	36	33	33	31	34	33
Quality of academic instruction	47	51	51	51	40	46	47	45	36	32	40	38
Teacher interest in students	51	50	50	50	42	51	46	46	37	43	35	37

*Low Socioeconomic Status

Figure 11
1980 Hispanic Sophomores* Who Rated Their Schools' Academic Instruction as Good or Excellent



*Low Socioeconomic Status
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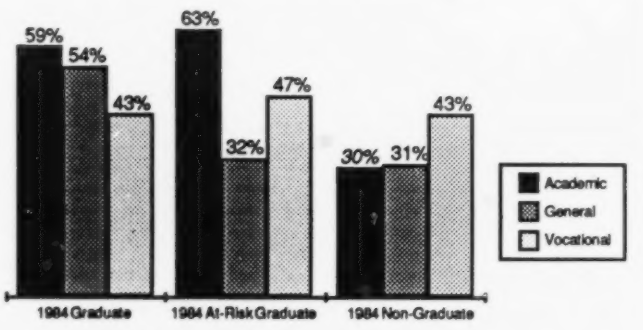
Figure 12
1980 Hispanic Sophomores* Who Rated Their Teachers' Interest in Students as Good or Excellent



*Low Socioeconomic Status
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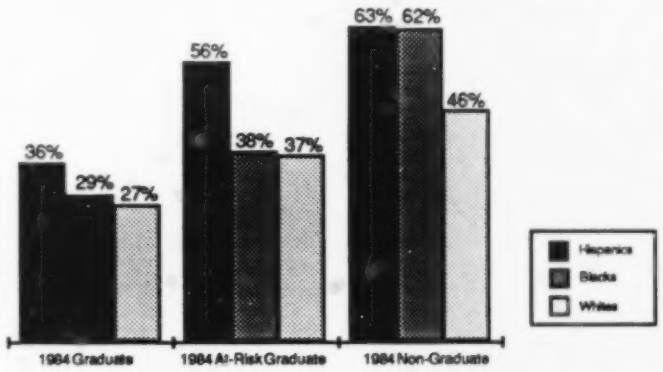
Figure 13

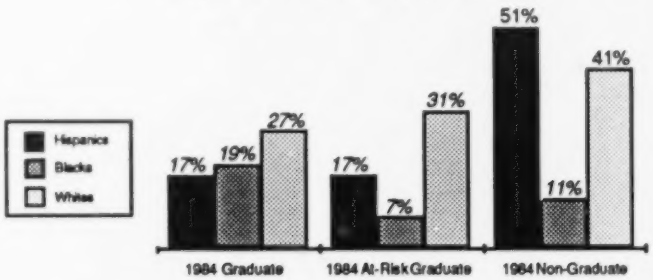
1980 Sophomores* Who Were 17 Years of Age or Older



*Low Socioeconomic Status

Figure 14

1980 Female Sophomores* 17 Years Old or Older Who Expected To Be Married by Age 19



*Low Socioeconomic Status
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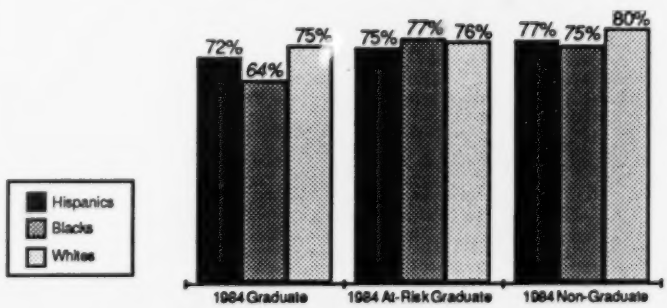
Figure 15

1980 Male Sophomores* 17 Years Old or Older Who Expected to Start Regular Work by Age 19



*Low Socioeconomic Stauts
Numbers in italics unreliable—shown for trend only

this definition, about 28% of our low SES sophomores were over-age, 17 years or older.

In Figure 13 we have organized the low SES sample by racial/ethnic group and by 1984 graduation status. The pattern is clear: the at-risk and non-graduate categories had the highest levels of over-age students. Almost two-thirds of the minority non-graduates were at least one year behind their chronological peers. Moreover, Hispanics exceeded both Blacks and Whites in all categories, especially in the at-risk category.

If the pattern relating over-age status and graduate status is clear, does a connection exist between over-age students and students who expected to be married or working by age 19? In Figure 14 we look at over-age female sophomores who expected to be married by age 19, arranged by their 1984 graduation status. (Except for Hispanic and White non-graduates, the percentages for the other categories are unreliable and are shown only to indicate trends among the categories.) About half the Hispanic females who did not graduate by 1984 had expected to be married by age 19.

Except for Blacks, the percentages for male sophomores, 17 years or older, who expected to start a regular job by age 19, are reliable. Figure 15 reveals that in most cases, regardless of later graduate status, about three-quarters or more of the low SES males expected to start regular work by 19.

It may seem that too much significance has been attached to the 28% of sophomores who were 17 or older. But the likelihood of over-age students being distributed evenly across the national student population is remote. Much more likely are concentrations of over-age stu-

dents in inner-city and rural schools, especially schools with many poorly-achieving students. These over-age students are likely to influence, if not determine, the expectations about adult behavior among students in these schools. School policies, plus their teachers' low expectations for poor youths, plus the normal psycho-social maturation processes among youth, plus working-class attitudes on work and family duties, altogether make it difficult for poor youths to swim upstream and opt for education and careers.

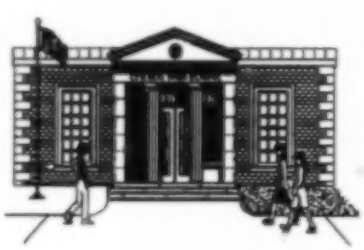
Policy Remedies

IT APPEARS that being over-age for grade level strongly influences poor students' decisions to leave school and assume adult responsibilities, and there is every indication that Hispanic students are disproportionately "held back" in school. By the time Hispanics reach high school, some 25% are two or more years over-age for their grade levels. (This is why some pupils reach the age of 16 without reaching the tenth grade.) In addition, it is estimated that some 40% of all Hispanics who drop out of school do so before reaching the spring semester of the tenth grade. Here we will discuss some of these factors, together with possible policy remedies which are preventive in nature.

The rationale for keeping back a student is simple: if the student has not learned enough by the end of term, then the student needs to spend more time in that grade. Or—often the case with Hispanics—if a student does not know enough English, the student is kept longer in a lower grade. **But simply repeating a grade does not mean that students receive the extra attention they still need to acquire the content of the grade or to catch up to their chronological peers, and research consistently has demonstrated that requiring students to repeat a grade is counter-productive and expensive for both the student and the school.**

We recommend that schools and students do not delay making up school work. If the student requires more time and help to master the material, then a classmate, an older student, or a volunteer tutor should be assigned to the student. Help can also take the form of after-school sessions, or intensive summer programs. And taking more time must not be seen as abnormal or as punishment.

This relationship between being over-age for grade level and dropping out of school supports the need to provide quality bilingual programs for limited English-proficient students. If students can learn English while they continue grade-level work in their native language, they are much more likely to keep pace with their peers. Subsidizing bilingual programs for limited-English pre-schoolers is an excellent way to prevent school delay in later years.



Does recommending extra help for the at-risk student mean that we advocate easier course work for the at-risk student? Not at all. Most at-risk students are underachievers. We believe that many students, including many Hispanics, never reach their potential, and could be undertaking more, not less, academic work.

To illustrate, in 1982 only 25% of all Hispanic seniors in public high schools were enrolled in academic programs, compared to 75% in general and vocational programs. But in a study of high school students who attend Catholic schools that serve low-income populations, researcher Valerie Lee found that Hispanics were as likely as Whites to be enrolled in academic programs, regardless of family income. In her 1986 study for the National Catholic Education Association, Lee reported that 59% of the very poor Hispanics were enrolled in academic programs (compared to 56% of the very poor Whites); 70% of the moderately poor Hispanics were so enrolled (compared to 66% of comparable Whites); and 80% of the Hispanic non-poor were so enrolled (compared to 81% of comparable Whites).

These differences in academic program enrollment between Hispanics in Catholic schools and the national Hispanic sample are striking, and may account in part for the higher achievement level of students, including Hispanics, in Catholic schools. It also may explain why the national disparity between White and Hispanic achievement is so great, while the spread between Whites and Hispanics in Catholic schools is small. The point, of course, is not that low SES children should be sent to Catholic

schools, but that public schools might well emulate the Catholic schools' high expectations for *all* students regardless of socioeconomic background.

The late Ron Edmonds, the Black researcher who was one of the guiding lights of the effective schools movement, contended that it is the reaction of school personnel to the class background of students that is the problem, not that the poor simply do badly in school. Probably a similar assertion can be made about personnel reactions to racial, cultural, and language differences.

Any attempt to upgrade school expectations for at-risk students must be accompanied by an openness and a willingness to embrace flexibility and change. Not until a school has an orderly climate and a schoolwide concern for the education of all children can the school faculty begin to raise academic standards and expect greater effort on the part of all students. To insure both excellence and equity in our public schools, we must change the way schools are organized and operated. ***This is a fundamental challenge to the reform movement, a challenge that must be faced before genuine and continuing academic rigor can be instilled.***

Just as schools should adopt instructional styles that allow students to be active learners through participation, deliberation, and reflection, students of high school age should be given more responsibility in self-government, including the setting of standards for behavior and deportment, monitoring compliance, and helping each other in a variety of ways, including help with school assignments. Student responsibilities must be meaningful, and must involve the solving of real problems and the development of real opportunities to improve school life. This will require flexibility in the use of school resources.

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The aim of student participation is to foster positive relationships and accountability among students and between students and the school faculty and administration. We are not suggesting that schools be turned over to the students. We are suggesting that 15-, 16-, 17-, and 18-year-olds should begin to take some reasonable measure of responsibility for their education and their environment. Education is not an operation to be performed on passive, often sulky adolescents. When students are part of the process, they begin to have a stake in the school, and they begin to develop the leadership and self-sufficiency they will require to succeed in the worlds of work, community, and family. Over-age students might be more inclined to stay in school if the role of *student* embodied some status along with a sense of useful purpose. Many private schools, in fact, have long traditions of student involvement and responsibility.

A large student body can be a barrier to the development of strong relationships among students and faculty alike. But a school with a large student body can be organized into several mini-schools or "houses" under the same roof. Reducing the size of classes not only helps teachers manage instruction, it also allows for more interaction among students; researchers have found that smaller schools and classes correlate with lower dropout rates. Within these mini-organizations, all students have the opportunity to participate in a variety of non-academic roles.

Some examples illustrate how developing bonds among classmates gives students a sense of belonging and support:

- A Detroit program, Twelve Together, establishes groups of 12 students with varying abilities who pledge to help each other through all four years of high school. Each group is directed by two counselors, and group members are responsible for helping those who fall behind.

Don't Blame the Postal Service

Due to the great number of responses to HPDP's first issue of *The Research Bulletin*, to the expense of printing and mailing, and to the press of other projects, *The Research Bulletin* will be issued twice yearly instead of quarterly, and in a larger, more comprehensive format. The next issue will appear in Spring 1988.

- At a Catholic high school in Newark, the student body is divided into groups, composed of students with different abilities and interests; these groups compete with each other in a variety of ways, including attendance, community service, academics, and sports. After fresh-

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men are selected, they remain with the same group and faculty adviser throughout their four years of high school. Such competition and cooperation inspire among group members enthusiasm, devotion, and regard for each other and for the honor of the group.

It is important that students excel in areas other than the academic, for the sense of self-worth derived from these experiences often stimulates better school work or compensates for weak academic abilities. And, in general, at-risk youth from working-class and poverty backgrounds need active encouragement, through a variety of incentives and supports, if they are to stay and do well in school. A lack of opportunities or a lack of preparation to take advantage of opportunities often contributes to school failure, early parenthood and marriage, and a "here and now" devotion to work among Hispanic youth.

- Volunteers in Atlanta's Adopt-A-Student program work to combat these problems directly. They encourage juniors and seniors in the lowest quartiles of their classes to complete school, set career goals, improve academic performance, enhance job skills, identify interests, and work out a plan of future action. The volunteers continue contact with their students after graduation, and 80% of the program's graduates have obtained jobs.
- As part of New York City's dropout prevention program, every high school freshman receives a certificate of admission, redeemable upon graduation, to a college of the City University.
- Efforts are underway to pledge jobs in the private or public sector to New York City 9th graders who complete high school. The successful Boston Compact, composed of businesses and other interests, has in place just such an arrangement with the Boston schools. The promise of a job upon graduation can be a powerful inducement to stay in or to return to school.
- For students who need or prefer to work, a continuing education program can be helpful. California offers such a program for employed students over 16. These students study part time for their high school diplomas while they are employed. Reduced dropout rates have been reported for schools where this program is in operation; the rates are about half those of non-participating high schools in the state.

Possibly society's expectation that specific levels of education will be covered "on time" is outmoded. We should begin to encourage high school dropouts to consider themselves "stopouts," individuals who temporarily have delayed their schooling but will be returning to complete it at a future date. The "stopout" phenomenon already is well established at the post-secondary level.

Finally, while public schools clearly should become more aware of Hispanic culture and the needs of Hispanic children, and their decisions certainly should reflect that awareness, Hispanic parents and community members must resolve some contradictions in their expectations for their children. Wanting their children to remain and live close to the parental home, for example, often conflicts with a student's need to go away to an appropriate college, or an unmarried female's need to live away from the family home for reasons of education or career.

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In Future Issues

- Current employment and occupational trends of High-School-and-Beyond sophomores, plus findings from the Hispanic Policy Development Project's forthcoming major study on mainstreaming Hispanic dropouts.
- The language and immigration history of HSB's 1980 Hispanic sophomores, plus findings from another forthcoming major HPDP study on the shift to English language use among Spanish speakers in the United States.

The HSB Questions in 1980

Following are the original and the recoded questions. Note that not every student answered every question.

1. Please rate your school on each of the following aspects. Mark one oval for each line. (The choices were *Poor, Fair, Good, Excellent, Don't know.*)
   a. Condition of buildings and classrooms
   b. Library facilities
   c. Quality of academic instruction
   d. Reputation in the community
   e. Teacher interest in students
   f. Strict discipline
   g. Fairness of discipline
   h. School spirit

   This question was recoded, with choices combined as follows:
Poor or Fair, Good or Excellent, Don't know

2. How important is each of the following to you? Mark one oval for each line. (The choices were *Not important, Somewhat important, Very important.*)
   a. Being successful in my line of work
   b. Finding the right person to marry and having a happy family life
   c. Having lots of money
   d. Having strong friendships
   e. Being able to find steady work
   f. Being a leader in my community
   g. Being able to give my children better opportunities than I've had
   h. Living close to parents and relatives
   i. Getting away from this area of the country
   j. Working to correct social and economic inequalities
   k. Having children
   l. Having leisure time to enjoy my own interests

   This question was not recoded.

3. At what age do you expect to....
Mark one oval for each question. (The choices were *Don't expect to do this, Have already done this, Age in years—under 18, 18, 19,* etc.)
   a. Get married?
   b. Have your first child?
   c. Start your first regular (not summer) job?
   d. Live in your own home or apartment?
   e. Finish your full-time education?

   The age choices in this question were recoded as follows:
19 or younger, 20 to 24, 25 or older

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